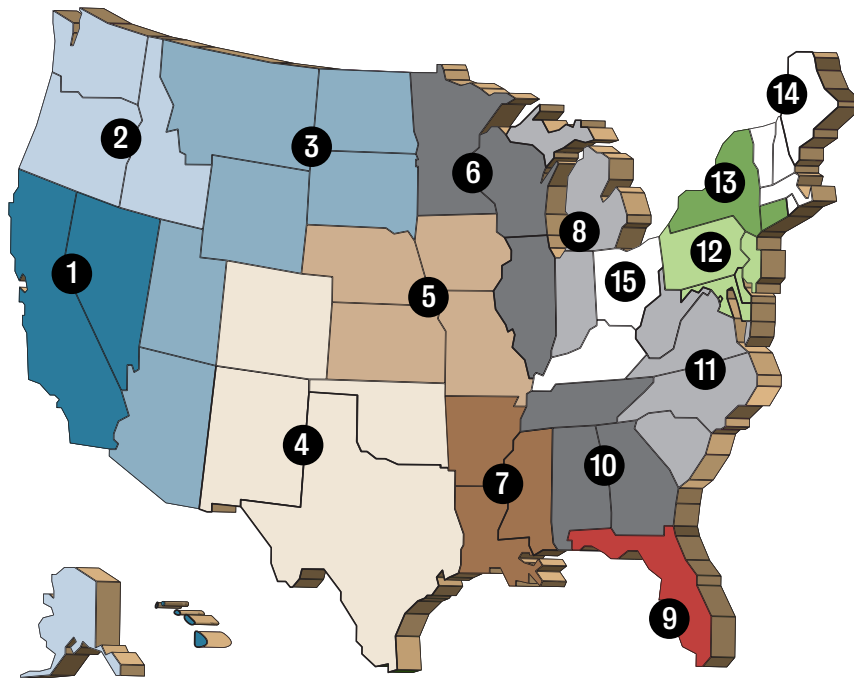


REPLACING THE PATCHWORK WITH BIG MACS

CMS is partway through reforming a scattered collection of Medicare carriers and fiscal intermediaries into a jurisdictional system of 15 Medicare administrative contractors that will handle both physician and hospital claims.



MAC jurisdictions

1. Palmetto
2. NHIC
3. Noridian
4. Trailblazer
5. WPS
6. To be determined
7. Pinnacle
8. To be determined
9. First Coast
10. To be determined
11. To be determined
12. Highmark
13. NGS
14. To be determined
15. To be determined

SOURCE: CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES

WHEN THE TRANSITION IS COMPLETE, THE NEW CONTRACTORS WILL:

■ Concentrate on one area of the country instead of spreading out over far-flung states. First Coast Service Options Inc., for example, used to be the carrier for both Florida and Connecticut.

■ Cover entire states instead of portions of states. Missouri and New York, for example, used to be carved into multiple regions by different carriers.

■ Make a single exception for Arlington County, Fairfax County and Alexandria City, which, unlike the rest of Virginia, will be part of jurisdiction 12.